

**To:** R3 EVERYONE[R3 EVERYONE@epa.gov]  
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**Subject:** EPA Mid-Atlantic Region Headlines for Thursday, June, 27, 2013

# **EPA Region III**

**Office of Public Affairs**

## **Mid-Atlantic Headlines**

**Thursday, June 27, 2013**

### **\*\*\* DAILY HOT LIST \*\*\***

#### **Report: Beachgoers should be careful of what's in the water**

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER When beachgoers take to the water at the New Jersey Shore and elsewhere, they may expect to come away with a nasty sunburn if they are not careful. But the Natural Resources Defense Council, in its 23d annual good-news-bad-news report on the nation's beaches released Wednesday, contends that beach lovers may be in for more than they bargained for these days in the form of dysentery, hepatitis, stomach flu, and rashes. Such cases are "extremely underreported," according to Jon Devine, a senior attorney for the NRDC, who spoke at a teleconference Wednesday from Washington. "People don't know that water can contain viruses, bacteria, and other parasites that can make you sick," he said. "And when they get sick, they don't associate the two." Nationally, high bacteria levels in the water caused beach closings or advisories on a cumulative 20,000 plus days in 2012, the report says. An advisory is a recommendation that people take extra precautions in certain areas where contamination is high, but not high enough to close the beach. Last summer, there were 2,000 closings or advisories issued for beaches in New Jersey and New York because of polluted water or the threat of contamination, according to the NRDC's *Testing the Waters: A Guide to Water Quality at Vacation Beaches*.

#### **OC, Del. beaches ranked "superstars" for water quality**

BALTIMORE SUN If you're thinking of hitting the beach anytime this summer, the Natural Resources Defense Council suggests you're much less likely to get sick playing in the surf at Ocean City or at Dewey and Rehoboth beaches in Delaware. The New York-based environmental group rates the Atlantic beaches closest to most Marylanders "superstars" for water quality, awarding them five stars for ensuring the health of bathers, along with 11 other beaches nationwide. Ocean City has gotten the group's five-star rating every years since 2008. The water is tested twice a week at O.C., the NRDC reported, and just 4 percent of samples taken last year in the stretch from 124th Street north to the Delaware line had bacteria levels that exceeded state water-quality limits. Only that northern portion of Ocean City's beach was rated.

The beaches at Rehoboth Avenue in Rehoboth and at Dagsworthy Street in Dewey also get tested twice a week, according to the group, and have even fewer elevated bacteria readings. In fact, Delaware as a whole earned top honors in NRDC's report card for monitoring water quality and ensuring bather safety at all of its beaches. Maryland, by comparison, came in 11th among states. Nationwide, the environmental group said the number of beach closings last year for unsanitary conditions dropped 14 percent, but it said that was largely because drier weather washed less pollution into the water. Even so, it said the number of closings and swim advisories topped 20,000 across the U.S. in 2012 -- a level exceeded for the eighth time in the past nine years. Such a string of closings and advisories indicates serious water pollution persists, the group said. The most common reason for closing a beach or issuing an advisory against swimming is a test showing excessive levels of bacteria, indicating the presence of human or animal waste in the water. The NRDC contends that beach water quality standards set by the Environmental Protection Agency aren't protective enough, and it's threatened to file suit if they aren't strengthened. The group contends EPA standards allow beaches to be considered safe even if up to 10 percent of samples exceed bacteria limits, a rate that could allow one in 28 bathers to come down with GI distress. Moreover, the NRDC complains the agency has neglected to set standards aimed at preventing skin rashes and ear infections from contact with tainted water.

### **Report: NC, Va. beaches rank high for water quality**

NORFOLK VIRGINIAN PILOT Beaches in Virginia and North Carolina once again ranked among the best in the country for clean water, according to an annual report released Wednesday by the Natural Resources Defense Council. Virginia ranked sixth of 30 states tested for beach water quality in 2012, and North Carolina placed third, according to the report "Testing the Waters: A Guide to Water Quality at Vacation Beaches." The two states received the same rankings for 2011. To compile its report, the environmental group analyzed data collected by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and state beach coordinators at more than 3,000 beaches. In Virginia, 4 percent of water samples in 2012 exceeded national public health limits for allowable bacteria levels. Two percent of samples in North Carolina exceeded limits, according to the report. That's compared with 21 percent in Ohio, which had the worst ranking. Two of the beaches with the highest rate of samples to exceed limits in the state: the beach just west of the Lesner Bridge in Virginia Beach with 17 percent and 10th View Beach Access in Norfolk with 9 percent. The beach near Lesner Bridge had closings or advisories four days last year, and 10th View had one, according to the report. King George County had the highest rate of contaminated samples with 25 percent, followed by Norfolk and Newport News with 5 percent, Accomack County with 4 percent, and Virginia Beach and Northampton County with 2 percent. Nationwide, 7 percent of water samples violated health standards in 2012, compared with 8 percent the previous two years, according to the report. The organization cited storm-water runoff and sewage as primary sources of pollution.

### **In attacking Obama on climate, W.Va. leaders ignore natural gas**

CHARLESTON GAZETTE CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- West Virginia's political leaders raced this week to attack President Obama's climate change plan and its potential impacts on the

already declining coal business, but they didn't mention another key part of the administration's plan: strong support for continued growth in natural gas drilling, especially in places like the Marcellus Shale region. During his landmark speech Tuesday at Georgetown University, Obama praised shale-gas drilling as a cheaper, cleaner fuel that can power the nation and create thousands of new jobs. "It's the transition fuel that can power our economy with less carbon pollution even as our businesses work to develop and then deploy more of the technology required for the even cleaner energy economy of the future," Obama said. The White House's 21-page climate plan adopts the natural gas industry's line that gas is a "bridge fuel" that generates fewer greenhouse gases and is ripe for replacing coal in power plants and gasoline or diesel as vehicle fuel. Obama acknowledged that more needs to be done to make natural gas drilling safe for water supplies and surrounding communities. The president also noted the need to better control leaks of the potent greenhouse gas methane from natural gas production, an issue that scientists say urgently needs more attention before the drilling boom advances much more. However, the president still cited it -- along with renewable sources -- as providing "clean energy." "Sometimes there are disputes about natural gas, but let me say this: We should strengthen our position as the top natural gas producer because, in the medium term at least, it not only can provide safe, cheap power, but it can also help reduce our carbon emissions," the president said in his speech Tuesday. Obama's strong push on natural gas didn't sit well with everyone in West Virginia, where environmental groups say a new state drilling law is far too weak and questions persist about whether new gas-industry jobs are going to in-state residents or not. "We look forward to a day when the administration sees fracked gas for what it is -- a fossil fuel of the past and a threat to public health," said Jim Kotcon, conservation chairman of the West Virginia chapter of the Sierra Club.

## **Editorial: The president scores a two-fer on coal power**

CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL President Obama announced Tuesday that he will personally control U.S. energy production, the U.S. economy and American household budgets - carbon dioxide being more important than any of those concerns. Having made it virtually impossible to build new coal-fired power plants, he announced that he will now order the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to restrict CO2 emissions at existing coal-fueled plants. He thus scored a two-fer. First, he placated some of the green power people who support him. They went half mad with approval, applauding the president for "taking a giant step forward" toward presidential control of air. (But only half mad. Many also want the president to outlaw natural gas and veto construction of the Keystone pipeline that would make the United States less dependent on foreign oil.) Second, simply by announcing his plan, the president made it likely that utilities will be unable able to raise money for new coal-fired plants anyway. On Monday, reported The Washington Post, "Consol Energy shares dropped 5.8 percent, Peabody Energy fell 7.2 percent, Cliffs Natural Resources tumbled 7.6 percent and Alpha Natural Resources slid 8 percent. "Walter Energy, a smaller company, sank 6.1 percent after pulling back on a planned \$1.55 billion credit refinancing." Faced with a hostile government and a likely capital strike, perhaps coal-fired utilities should bow to the inevitable and shut down as soon as possible. It would be cheaper. Low-income West Virginians can't afford electric power at today's prices anyway, much less with what House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, called "a carbon tax" added on. The president's pronouncement is bluster, of course. As Keith Johnson and Peter Nicholas of The Wall Street Journal noted, it would take years for the president to put his plan in place even if the

country poses no resistance. Obama runs no risks. He will be out of office when the lights go out. But he speaks for his party, so his majority in the U.S. Senate may beat him to the door. Oh, well.

## **EPA says it would accept data from Augusta County on bay pollution monitoring**

WAYNESBORO TIMES-VIRGINIAN VERONA -- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency told Augusta County this week it would accept data from nutrient pollution sampling the county is considering in two county rivers, the Middle and South rivers. The sampling is needed to provide accurate data on pollution leaving the county and going to the Chesapeake Bay. Augusta County supervisors last month tabled consideration of a sampling program because of the uncertainty of whether grants could be obtained to meet the \$256,000 operating costs over a period of four years. Supervisors were also uncertain about whether the EPA would take the data. The sampling program would offer concrete data on the amount of phosphorous, nitrogen and sediment leaving Augusta County rivers and flowing into the Chesapeake Bay. The sampling equipment would be provided by the U.S. Geological Survey. The EPA wrote North River Supervisor Marshall Pattie this week to tell him the sampling program data would be acceptable to them, and said USGS is providing similar nutrient pollution data at other Virginia testing sites. Pattie said he ran for office two years ago on a promise to farmers that he would get the accurate nutrient pollution data. He believes this program would show the EPA the accurate information. Augusta County Supervisors said Wednesday they are expected to revisit the sampling idea when they meet in late July for a briefing. One reason supervisors tabled the idea of the program last month was because the uncertainty of EPA accepting the sampling data. But the letter sent to Pattie on Tuesday from EPA official Gary Shenk in the Annapolis, Md., Chesapeake Bay office states that the monitoring proposed in Augusta County "is consistent with other monitoring being done as part of the Chesapeake Bay River monitoring program."

## **Official Says EPA to Finalize Tier 3 Gasoline Rule by End of Year**

BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT The Environmental Protection Agency plans to finalize Tier 3 standards for vehicle emissions and gasoline by the end of the year, an EPA official said June 26. The standards, as proposed, would cut the allowable sulfur content in gasoline from 30 parts per million to 10 ppm beginning in 2017. The proposal also includes new limits on volatile organic compounds, nitrogen oxides, and particulate matter emissions for new light- and heavy-duty vehicles, as well as new evaporative emissions standards. The standards are expected to help areas meet national ambient air quality standards for ozone, nitrogen oxides, and particulate matter. The rule also is intended to set a single, national standard for fuels after California issued its own low-sulfur gasoline standards. Finalizing the standards is a "huge priority" for EPA, said Christopher Grundler, director of the EPA Office of Transportation and Air Quality. Grundler was speaking at the 2013 Alternative Clean Transportation Expo on a panel on advancing alternative fuel and clean vehicle technologies. EPA published the proposed standards May 21, then extended the comment period on the proposal until July 1 in response to requests from industry groups. Other EPA priorities over the next few years are implementing the

greenhouse gas emissions and fuel economy standards that have been put in place over the last three years, Grundler said. This includes two sets of standards for cars and light trucks and the first set of standards for heavy-duty vehicles. EPA is shifting resources to focus on implementing the three sets of fuel economy standards, Grundler said. The agency will conduct research to see if the emissions reductions and oil savings estimated under the standards are actually achieved, he said.

## **Republicans Condemn Climate Plan, Step Up Criticism of McCarthy**

BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT Congressional Republicans June 26 said President Obama overextended the reach of the executive branch in his plan to address climate change, adding it would impose costly regulations that would cripple the American economy. Republicans vehemently objected to a proposal from Obama to regulate carbon emissions from both new and existing power plants, warning the regulations would cost thousands of American jobs and raise energy costs to citizens. Sen. John Barrasso (R-Wyo.) said Senate Republicans will use the Congressional Review Act to attempt to halt the emissions regulations. Both chambers would have to pass a joint resolution of disapproval to override a federal agency's regulation. "We all want to make energy as clean as we can, as fast as we can, and do it in ways that don't raise costs for American families," Barrasso told reporters. "His regulations are impacting the economy. The costs of these regulations are real, and the benefits are unknown." Rep. John Shimkus (R-Ill.) said Republicans are "united in our opposition" to the climate plan outlined by Obama. Obama June 25 called for the Environmental Protection Agency to regulate carbon emissions from new and existing power plants in a broad speech outlining his approach to addressing climate change. The president called for expanded international engagement on the issue, for greater energy efficiency measures, and for preparing communities for the effects of climate change, among other measures. "We don't have time for a meeting of the Flat Earth Society," Obama said in his speech. "Sticking your head in the sand might make you feel safer, but it's not going to protect you from the coming storm. And ultimately, we will be judged as a people, and as a society, and as a country on where we go from here." Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) said the Obama administration's "war on coal" will cost jobs and said the administration has adopted a "none of the above" approach to American energy development. "I'd note that such an approach is basically nonsensical, since it ignores what's necessary to keep our country's growing energy needs met as we move toward a future where renewables look set to play a greater role," McConnell said in a floor speech. "Because it simply tries to pretend that it will not take years, if not decades, for these other types of energy to come online in a way that will truly meet our energy needs."

## **Big Coal to Fight Obama Plan**

WALL STREET JOURNAL The beleaguered domestic coal industry, bracing for the possibility that no more coal-burning power plants will ever be built on U.S. soil, is teaming up with other business groups to blunt the impact of President Obama's climate-change agenda, while also shifting its business focus to exports. Following the president's announcement Tuesday of a sweeping plan to cut greenhouse-gas emissions, including at existing coal-fired power plants, some company officials said Wednesday there is also greater urgency to develop

clean-coal technology, including a cost-effective way to capture and store carbon dioxide. The coal industry plans to coordinate lobbying efforts with manufacturers and other business groups to fight rules they argue will raise electricity costs. Several groups plan to reach out to members of Congress from states that rely heavily on coal generation. "It'll be interesting, for sure, and loud," Kevin Crutchfield, chief executive of Bristol, Va., coal producer Alpha Natural Resources Inc., said in an interview. The Environmental Protection Agency is expected to develop the regulations over the next year. While final climate-plan details are unknown, one thing is clear: The domestic market for coal that is used to produce electricity will shrink as a result of the new rules and other market forces, most notably a surge in U.S. production of low-priced and cleaner-burning natural gas. "The U.S. market for coal is going to be smaller going forward. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure it out," said Mr. Crutchfield. "The question is, 'How much smaller could it get?'" Mr. Crutchfield said Alpha and other coal producers will pursue more exports of coal to China, India and Europe, including both thermal coal used to generate electricity and higher-grade metallurgical coal used to make steel. "You'll see more of a pivot on everybody's part," he said. President Obama, as part of his plan to combat climate change, called for cutting greenhouse-gas emissions 17% from 2005 levels by 2020, to be partly achieved by cutting carbon emissions from power plants. The rules could require utilities to add new equipment to lower emissions and make less-efficient plants unprofitable to operate, experts say. Increasing costs to burn coal would prompt utilities to use more existing capacity for natural gas and other fuels and to build new plants to increase that type of power generation. Energy analysts say the new rules, combined with environmental standards now being implemented, could push about one-third of the U.S. coal-fired fleet into retirement. The administration's plan to reduce carbon emissions didn't surprise anyone in the coal industry. EPA rules to lower other pollutants have already led to the retirement of coal-fired power plants and lower coal demand, prompting greater focus on exports.

## **Marcellus report out for public comment**

CUMBERLAND TIMES-NEWS CUMBERLAND — An important draft report on the best practices for drilling for natural gas in Marcellus shale, prepared for a state commission examining the issue, has been released for public comment. Depending on your perspective, the report, if adopted as state policy, would discourage gas development in Maryland or leave too many loopholes for potential environmental damage. "My fear is they've gone to the extent ... that the gas industry will look at the regulations and say 'no thanks,'" said Allegany County Commissioner Bill Valentine, a member of Gov. Martin O'Malley's Marcellus Shale Safe Drilling Initiative Advisory Commission. Valentine said he'll sign off on the best practices report because it was a commission effort and no single member is "100 percent satisfied with the report." The report embraces a "gold standard" for drilling practices and will be used to begin framing legislation and regulations for drilling, Valentine said. "Is it to look at best practices or to stop drilling without saying so?" Valentine said. The draft report was prepared by the Maryland Department of the Environment and the Department of Natural Resources. "Personally, I don't think you can legislate away all possibilities (for problems)," Valentine said. Personal property rights are also at stake, Valentine said. If property owners cannot make use of mineral rights they own, they should be compensated, Valentine said, just like farmers who give up development rights to their land in agricultural land preservation programs. "Maryland has only 1 percent of the Marcellus shale but will have the most stringent regulations of any state,"

Valentine said.

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## PENNSYLVANIA

### **PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER**

Report: Beachgoers should be careful of what's in the water When beachgoers take to the water at the New Jersey Shore and elsewhere, they may expect to come away with a nasty sunburn if they are not careful. But the Natural Resources Defense Council, in its 23d annual good-news-bad-news report on the nation's beaches released Wednesday, contends that beach lovers may be in for more than they bargained for these days in the form of dysentery, hepatitis, stomach flu, and rashes. Such cases are "extremely underreported," according to Jon Devine, a senior attorney for the NRDC, who spoke at a teleconference Wednesday from Washington. "People don't know that water can contain viruses, bacteria, and other parasites that can make you sick," he said. "And when they get sick, they don't associate the two." Nationally, high bacteria levels in the water caused beach closings or advisories on a cumulative 20,000 plus days in 2012, the report says. An advisory is a recommendation that people take extra precautions in certain areas where contamination is high, but not high enough to close the beach. Last summer, there were 2,000 closings or advisories issued for beaches in New Jersey and New York because of polluted water or the threat of contamination, according to the NRDC's *Testing the Waters: A Guide to Water Quality at Vacation Beaches*.

Will Obama's climate plan boost Pa., NJ? As the dust settles on President Obama's climate action plan released Tuesday, industry and advocacy groups here are trying to sort out this: How much will it hurt coal, the region's traditional but fading power source? And how much will it boost renewables and nuclear? In both states, a cascade of regulatory blows has forced coal-fired power plants to upgrade, close, or switch to natural gas. In both, two nuclear generators are on the drawing boards. Wind energy has grown in Pennsylvania. New Jersey is a national leader in solar power, and plans for offshore wind farms are progressing. "Given energy growth, we will need all of them," said Gene Barr, president of the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry. The state's historic link to mining made it a national leader in coal-fired energy plants, along with their unhealthy emissions. Its aging fleet of roughly three dozen coal-fired power plants produces 43 percent of the power generated in the state. "It is safe to say the impact [of Obama's plan] would be significant," said State Rep. Ron Miller, a York County Republican who chairs the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee. He highlighted the economic benefit of cheap electricity from coal and the 63,000 people employed in the mining industry. But in the most recent state rankings from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Pennsylvania ranks third in the nation in carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuel combustion, based on 2010 emissions. That year, nearly half the state's emissions came from generating electricity. The state's emissions have since declined because natural gas has begun to displace coal. Nine of its roughly three dozen coal-fired power plants have announced deactivations and retirements. Some plants have announced a switch to natural gas.

Layoffs at Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Since March, when the 2013 Flower Show had its lowest attendance in more than a decade, layoff rumors have traumatized staff at the

Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, the show's producer. On Wednesday, the rumor came true - 22 of 133 full- and part-time jobs were cut and two more downgraded to part time. The changes affect almost every level except the top - including communications; development; Green Scene magazine; human resources; landscape management; library; marketing; programs; and Meadowbrook Farm, the PHS estate garden, greenhouse, and retail operation in Abington Township. Eventually, five of the eliminated positions will be reincarnated as different jobs and filled with new hires. Even so, the reduction is PHS's largest in decades and possibly ever. The nonprofit was founded in 1827. "It's never good when [layoffs] happen, but I do believe organizations go through this, and I think that shortly that you'll see what's coming out the other end is much more focused," said Drew Becher, PHS president since 2010. The layoffs are expected to save \$1.2 million, the amount of lost ticket sales alone at this year's Flower Show. Becher said that when the current fiscal year ends Sunday, PHS would be \$1.8 million in the hole, the second time in four years the nonprofit has faced a deficit

Since March, when the 2013 Flower Show had its lowest attendance in more than a decade, layoff rumors have traumatized staff at the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, the show's producer. On Wednesday, the rumor came true - 22 of 133 full- and part-time jobs were cut and two more downgraded to part time. The changes affect almost every level except the top - including communications; development; Green Scene magazine; human resources; landscape management; library; marketing; programs; and Meadowbrook Farm, the PHS estate garden, greenhouse, and retail operation in Abington Township. Eventually, five of the eliminated positions will be reincarnated as different jobs and filled with new hires. Even so, the reduction is PHS's largest in decades and possibly ever. The nonprofit was founded in 1827. "It's never good when [layoffs] happen, but I do believe organizations go through this, and I think that shortly that you'll see what's coming out the other end is much more focused," said Drew Becher, PHS president since 2010. The layoffs are expected to save \$1.2 million, the amount of lost ticket sales alone at this year's Flower Show. Becher said that when the current fiscal year ends Sunday, PHS would be \$1.8 million in the hole, the second time in four years the nonprofit has faced a deficit

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### **PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE**

Lawmakers disagree over whether state is getting its fair share from shale drilling

HARRISBURG -- Legislative Democrats claim that an impact fee imposed on natural gas pumped from Marcellus Shale regions doesn't produce enough revenue, but one Republican lawmaker says it's paying off nicely for counties and towns in his area. State Rep. Eli Evankovich, R-Murrysville, said that Westmoreland County will receive almost \$1.58 million from the gas impact fee this year, while seven towns in the county will split an additional \$152,000. The other county in his district, Armstrong, will get \$591,000, with four towns in that county splitting an additional \$41,000. "Counties and municipalities statewide are beginning to reap the financial benefits that were promised under Act 13 of 2012," which created the natural gas impact fee, he said last week. "Our local governments have the ability to use these funds for projects directly impacted by natural gas drilling and associated development, such as road repairs, infrastructure improvements and emergency training and response." But Democratic legislators counter that towns and counties, as well as state government, should be getting even more revenue from the underground gas, which they say has been a bonanza for private drilling companies, most of them from out of state. In the two years the impact fee law has been in effect, Mr. Evankovich said, almost \$407 million has been collected from drilling companies. But Democrats, such as Rep. Joe Markosek, D-Monroeville, said that if a severance tax on natural gas had been enacted -- as they unsuccessfully fought for -- an additional \$548 million would have been generated. Democrats favored a plan to impose a tax of several cents for every 1,000 cubic feet of gas drawn from the shale.

Ukrainians come to Carnegie to study *Marcellus shale* gas Under three golden domes that top the St. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Carnegie, church bells rang as nine Ukrainian dignitaries and elected officials met Monday afternoon with a U.S. congressman, borough residents and elected officials for a cultural and informational exchange. U.S. Rep. Tim Murphy, R-Upper St. Clair, hosted members of the Ukrainian parliament and other officials who he said were visiting Western Pennsylvania to learn more about shale-gas exploration. With an American flag on one side and a blue and yellow Ukrainian flag on the other side of the stone steps in front of the church, the Rev. Steve Repa, pastor, welcomed his visitors. Father Repa speaks fluent Ukrainian, which was useful, because Mr. Murphy speaks none, and the visitors spoke little or no English. Inside the Mansfield Avenue church, which bears a plaque saying the historic landmark was built in 1906, visiting delegates seemed to enjoy hearing Father Repa speak about the history of his church and the local Ukrainian community.

Editorial: Going to extremes: A report seeks to fault reputable environmentalists (Wednesday) Clearing the air is important, in more ways than one. Three months ago the Post-Gazette and others applauded the formation of the Center for Sustainable Shale Development, a collaboration of environmental groups and energy companies that want to raise operating standards in the Marcellus Shale gas industry. The higher standards would push the industry to adopt new practices that would cut engine emissions, increase water recycling, enhance groundwater protection, improve wastewater disposal and reduce the toxicity of fracking fluid. The better practices would work to everyone's benefit. Who could be against that? The Public Accountability Initiative, for one. The left-leaning group released a report this month that tries to raise doubts about the environmentalists who are part of the CSSD. Among the environmentally active groups that the report seeks to discredit are the Heinz Endowments, the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, the Clean Air Task Force and the Environmental Defense Fund. It faults the groups -- unfairly -- for links to the industry through board members, despite the fact that the organizations have a history of commitment and action on a clean environment.

### **PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE REVIEW**

Gas well fees making impact on Sewickley, South Huntingdon townships Officials in Sewickley and South Huntingdon townships say they have not yet decided how they will spend, or if they will spend, the more than \$215,000 in Marcellus shale gas well impact fees that each of those two municipalities will get from the state. Among municipalities in the region, Sewickley and South Huntingdon -- which had more natural gas wells than other communities -- received the most money from the fees levied on natural gas producers under the Unconventional Gas Well Impact Fee Act. Sewickley Township will receive \$237,789 for 2012 for 32 wells that are eligible for the Marcellus shale gas well impact fee, while South Huntingdon will receive \$218,321 for the 29 eligible wells, according to the Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission, which collects and distributes the money. The PUC announced the distribution of the shale gas well impact fees earlier this month. "We haven't even spent last year's" allocation of \$141,256, said Sewickley Township Supervisor Wanda Layman. Sewickley's allocation for 2012 represents about 15 percent of the township's \$1.56 million budget for 2013. Sewickley's allocation for 2012 is up about 68 percent from the township's 2011 allocation. It's an unexpected windfall for Sewickley, which had conservatively projected in its 2013 budget that it would receive only \$112,000. South Huntingdon Supervisor Eddie Troup said no decision has been made on how to spend the \$218,321, which is about 15 percent of the township's \$1.45 million budget for this

year. Supervisor Scott Painter suggested setting aside \$50,000 for emergencies.

Fixes to sewage authority's Harmar, Cheswick facilities expected to cost \$200K The Allegheny Valley Joint Sewage Authority on Wednesday decided to move forward with equipment repairs at its Harmar plant and Cheswick pump station. Both projects are expected to cost an estimated \$198,000, plus an additional \$8,000 for engineering work and putting the projects out for bid. The plant work involves repairing a moveable bridge that moves above a basin to transport bacteria-laden sludge back into treatment tanks. The project will cost about \$119,000. Replacing the bridge would have cost \$1 million or more, said plant manager Richard Chiavetta. "This is a Band-Aid approach for sure," he told board members. "We're hoping to get five years out of it." The board also approved replacing two grinders inside the Cheswick pump station at a cost of \$79,000. The work also includes repairs to hatches and relief valves. The authority had originally hoped to repair four of its five pump stations. But at a cost of \$390,000, the board chose to focus on Cheswick, which is most in need of maintenance.

Allegheny County gives preliminary OK to borrow \$49M for infrastructure projects Allegheny County Council members gave a preliminary go-ahead on Wednesday on two proposals from Executive Rich Fitzgerald, including borrowing up to \$49.8 million for road ...

### **STATE IMPACT PENNSYLVANIA**

Obama Administration Releases State-By-State Climate Reports A day after President Obama unveiled his plans to tackle climate change, the White House has released regional reports, outlining the issue state-by-state. According to the Obama administration, Pennsylvania's power plants and industrial facilities released 150 million metric tons of carbon pollution in 2011, which is the annual equivalent of 32 million cars. The report also cites 13 major disasters that have occurred in Pennsylvania over the past decade, which include recent events like Tropical Storm Lee and Hurricane Sandy. The state received \$9.9 million in federal aid for Sandy relief. Governor Corbett has criticized Obama's plan, calling it a war on jobs and coal. Today Corbett's re-election campaign sent out an email to supporters, calling the president's initiative a "devastating attack on our economy." "Yesterday President Obama announced his plan to kill jobs and weaken our national security by imposing new regulations on the energy sector, particularly in the coal industry," wrote Corbett's campaign manager, Mike Barley.

### **ERIE TIMES-NEWS**

Presque Isle beach receives mixed review in study One of Presque Isle State Park's beaches got a mixed review in a study focusing on the safety of waters at 200 popular beaches across the country. The Natural Resources Defense Council's annual beach water report, based largely on data from 2012, was released Wednesday morning to call attention to the negative effects of stormwater runoff and sewage getting into public waters. Presque Isle's Beach 6 was the only beach in Pennsylvania that was rated in the study. That beach scored three out of five stars, earning praise for how often park officials test for "bacteria, viruses and other contaminants" and how they notify the public of contaminated waters. The beach is tested twice a week, and positive tests mean notices posted at the beach and online. For a perfect score, a distinction earned by only 13 beaches, less than 5 percent of a beach's samples can come back with more than state- and EPA-determined levels of contaminants and maintain the low level of pollution for three years. The study said 14 percent of Beach 6's samples were contaminated in 2012. In

2011, 6 percent of samples were contaminated. Beach 6's numbers are well above the 7 percent national average in 2012. But Presque Isle State Park Operations Manager Harry Leslie said those numbers are misleading because his park is doing more testing and being more proactive at issuing advisories than other beaches and parks in different areas. "People need to remember that each state does things differently," Leslie said. During a conference call announcing the study, Steve Fleischli, director of NRDC's water program, urged communities to adopt "green infrastructure" that will keep sewage and contaminated water from flowing into larger bodies of water. While Leslie criticized the study's method of comparing data, he said he is glad it shines a light on stormwater issues. "It brings awareness to a national issue," Leslie said. The study also identified a group of "repeat offenders" -- beaches that have had more than 25 percent of samples come back contaminated each year since 2008. No Pennsylvania beaches were on that list, but four Ohio beaches were, including Lakeshore Park in Ashtabula County.

Precautionary swimming advisories lifted for 2 Presque Isle beaches A precautionary swimming advisory was lifted today for Beach 1 West and Barracks Beach at Presque Isle State Park. Park officials posted the advisory Tuesday due to high winds and waves that often cause high bacterial counts in Lake Erie waters. Advisories are also posted when E. coli bacteria counts are between 235 and 999 colonies per 100 milliliters of water. Swimming is permitted at beaches with advisories, but it's recommended that swimmers avoid swallowing lake water or getting lake water into open cuts or wounds.

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## WASHINGTON, D.C.

### **WASHINGTON POST**

Blog: Report: Path to clean-energy innovation means anger on the left and right Here's what we're reading/watching today: 1) The non-profit technology-focused think tank the Information Technology & Innovation Foundation (ITIF) is out with a new report, offering a prescription for the nation's clean-energy future. The report, "Drilling for Innovation: Funding Clean Energy R&D with Oil & Gas Revenue", was released Wednesday morning — a day after President Obama announced his Climate Action Plan — a sweeping agenda to tackle climate change. The president's plan includes instructing the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to propose limits on carbon dioxide emissions by 2015 for existing coal- and gas-fired utilities, reports The Post's Juliet Eilperin. Utilities executives as well as conservative Democrats and Republicans have voiced their disapproval. ITIF report authors, Megan Nicholson and Matthew Stepp conclude, however, that a proposal with bipartisan appeal, hard as it may be to believe, can be crafted: "Generating new revenue for public investments in energy innovation from oil and gas drilling is fertile ground for high-impact, bipartisan policymaking. Proposals on the left raise drilling fees to invest in limited clean energy technology efforts; proposals on the right demand expanded drilling but keep rates and fees relatively low. A compromise between these proposals is not difficult to imagine: expand drilling in specific offshore territories while moderately increasing fees and royalty rates, and direct the new revenue toward R&D efforts that will eventually eliminate the country's fossil fuel dependence."

Same-sex spouses of federal employees could benefit under high court ruling In striking down

the Defense of Marriage Act, the U.S. Supreme Court specifically referred in several places to the law's impact on federal employee benefit programs, raising the prospect that those benefits now will be extended to same-sex spouses. Because of the DOMA law's definition of marriage as between a man and a woman, several of the most valuable of federal employment-related benefits — coverage under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program and eligibility for survivor benefits under federal retirement programs — have been denied to same-sex spouses of federal employees and retirees. President Obama has ordered agencies to "review all relevant federal statutes to ensure this decision, including its implications for federal benefits and obligations, is implemented swiftly and smoothly." Acting Office of Personnel Management Director Elaine Kaplan said in a statement that OPM "will be working closely with the Department of Justice and other agencies to provide additional guidance for federal human resources professionals, benefits officers, and our employees and annuitants. While we recognize that our married gay and lesbian employees have already waited too long for this day, we ask for their continued patience as we take the steps necessary to review the Supreme Court's decision and implement it."

Diluted oil sands crude no more likely to leak from pipeline than other oil, study finds The diluted form of heavy crude from Canadian oil sands fields is no more likely to leak from a pipeline than other forms of oil, an arm of the National Academy of Sciences reported Tuesday. The finding, after an extensive study by the National Research Council, refutes a claim by opponents of the controversial Keystone XL pipeline extension, who contend that the "diluted bitumen" it would carry is more corrosive than other forms of crude and thus more likely to leak. The TransCanada pipeline company hopes to transport 830,000 barrels of crude per day from oil sands fields in Alberta to refineries in the Gulf of Mexico via the 1,100-mile Keystone extension. The project has become a litmus test for environmentalists, who say construction of the pipeline will promote more-rapid extraction of an especially dirty form of crude and contribute 15 percent more greenhouse gases than production of other crude oil. The State Department must decide whether to allow the project.

### **WASHINGTON TIMES**

Obama administration pumps unprecedented power into EPA With the Environmental Protection Agency set to take on an even broader regulatory role in the years ahead, a report released Wednesday shows the agency's footprint already is at a historic high. The study — released by the American Legislative Exchange Council, a nonprofit group of state legislators — details how the EPA has grown much more aggressive under President Obama. It specifically cites the agency's record number of "regulatory disapprovals" of state strategies to meet federal environmental standards, coupled with a never-before-seen number of "federal implementation plans," de facto takeovers of states' blueprints to comply with the Clean Air and Clean Water acts. The study also takes aim at the EPA's close working relationship with leading environmental groups to rewrite regulations without the involvement of Congress or state leaders, and it accuses the agency of having "severely limited states' fuel choices" through stricter limits on coal-fired power plants. "The EPA is supposed to serve as a resource for states, but in the last few years we've seen a more nationalized environmental policy," said Todd Wynn, director of the council's energy task force. He added that his organization will continue to push "policies to help state legislators push back against an intrusive federal government."

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## DELAWARE

### WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL

Delaware River and Bay channel deepening moves south

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## WEST VIRGINIA

### CHARLESTON GAZETTE

In attacking Obama on climate, W.Va. leaders ignore natural gas CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- West Virginia's political leaders raced this week to attack President Obama's climate change plan and its potential impacts on the already declining coal business, but they didn't mention another key part of the administration's plan: strong support for continued growth in natural gas drilling, especially in places like the Marcellus Shale region. During his landmark speech Tuesday at Georgetown University, Obama praised shale-gas drilling as a cheaper, cleaner fuel that can power the nation and create thousands of new jobs. "It's the transition fuel that can power our economy with less carbon pollution even as our businesses work to develop and then deploy more of the technology required for the even cleaner energy economy of the future," Obama said. The White House's 21-page climate plan adopts the natural gas industry's line that gas is a "bridge fuel" that generates fewer greenhouse gases and is ripe for replacing coal in power plants and gasoline or diesel as vehicle fuel. Obama acknowledged that more needs to be done to make natural gas drilling safe for water supplies and surrounding communities. The president also noted the need to better control leaks of the potent greenhouse gas methane from natural gas production, an issue that scientists say urgently needs more attention before the drilling boom advances much more. However, the president still cited it -- along with renewable sources -- as providing "clean energy." "Sometimes there are disputes about natural gas, but let me say this: We should strengthen our position as the top natural gas producer because, in the medium term at least, it not only can provide safe, cheap power, but it can also help reduce our carbon emissions," the president said in his speech Tuesday. Obama's strong push on natural gas didn't sit well with everyone in West Virginia, where environmental groups say a new state drilling law is far too weak and questions persist about whether new gas-industry jobs are going to in-state residents or not. "We look forward to a day when the administration sees fracked gas for what it is -- a fossil fuel of the past and a threat to public health," said Jim Kotcon, conservation chairman of the West Virginia chapter of the Sierra Club.

Board delays methane rule again SUTTON, W.Va. -- Members of a state board have again put off making a major decision that is required before West Virginia inspectors can begin enforcing tougher methane monitoring requirements contained in Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin's 2012 mine safety legislation. Rules to implement the methane monitoring language were on the agenda for a Tuesday meeting of the state Board of Coal Mine Health and Safety. But the board, meeting at a hotel in Sutton, never took up the matter. "It's disappointing that they haven't addressed it yet,"

said Tomblin administration Deputy Commerce Secretary Joshua Jarrell, who attended the meeting. "We've encouraged them to address that rule, but it's an independent board." The state Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training, which would enforce the rule issued by the board, is part of the state Department of Commerce. The rules at issue are needed to implement the legislation's mandate to tighten the state's requirement for mining equipment to be automatically shut off when the explosive gas methane is detected underground. Under the bill, board members had four months from the bill's effective date -- or by October 2012 -- to write the rule. Board members were unable to act on the rule at Tuesday's meeting because one of the board members, United Mine Workers representative Ted Hapney, was absent. Earlier this year, the board was also unable to act on the matter because of member absences. Under state law, all six voting members of the board must be present for votes on any substantive matter. The six voting members are evenly split between industry and labor representatives appointed by the governor after the coal industry and the UMW recommend them.

South Charleston to host electronics recycling event CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- The South Charleston Chamber of Commerce, Associated Systems Professionals and Bluegrass E-Cycle will team up for a free electronic recycling event June 28. The event will take place from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the South Charleston...

### **CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL**

Editorial: The president scores a two-fer on coal power President Obama announced Tuesday that he will personally control U.S. energy production, the U.S. economy and American household budgets - carbon dioxide being more important than any of those concerns. Having made it virtually impossible to build new coal-fired power plants, he announced that he will now order the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to restrict CO2 emissions at existing coal-fueled plants. He thus scored a two-fer. First, he placated some of the green power people who support him. They went half mad with approval, applauding the president for "taking a giant step forward" toward presidential control of air. (But only half mad. Many also want the president to outlaw natural gas and veto construction of the Keystone pipeline that would make the United States less dependent on foreign oil.) Second, simply by announcing his plan, the president made it likely that utilities will be unable able to raise money for new coal-fired plants anyway. On Monday, reported The Washington Post, "Consol Energy shares dropped 5.8 percent, Peabody Energy fell 7.2 percent, Cliffs Natural Resources tumbled 7.6 percent and Alpha Natural Resources slid 8 percent. "Walter Energy, a smaller company, sank 6.1 percent after pulling back on a planned \$1.55 billion credit refinancing." Faced with a hostile government and a likely capital strike, perhaps coal-fired utilities should bow to the inevitable and shut down as soon as possible. It would be cheaper. Low-income West Virginians can't afford electric power at today's prices anyway, much less with what House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, called "a carbon tax" added on. The president's pronouncement is bluster, of course. As Keith Johnson and Peter Nicholas of The Wall Street Journal noted, it would take years for the president to put his plan in place even if the country poses no resistance. Obama runs no risks. He will be out of office when the lights go out. But he speaks for his party, so his majority in the U.S. Senate may beat him to the door. Oh, well.

Report reveals W.Va. carbon emissions CHARLESTON, W.Va. - The White House, in continuing its pitch to fight carbon pollution, blames climate change for the large number of

droughts, flooding and even asthma and Lyme disease in West Virginia over the last few years. President Barack Obama on Tuesday delivered a speech about climate change, vowing his administration would "put an end to the limitless dumping of carbon pollution." According to a West Virginia-specific report released by the White House on Wednesday, state power plants and industrial facilities emitted more than 85 million metric tons of carbon pollution into the air in 2011, about as much as 18 million cars. The report said increased incidence of droughts, crop damage, flooding, mudslides, landslides, and some diseases could be caused by those greenhouse gases, which are believed to trap heat in the earth's atmosphere and increase the planet's temperature. "This is not just a high-level national problem. It's a local problem as well, impacting real people who are experiencing real pain," Shaun Donovan, secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, said during a conference call with reporters on Wednesday. Droughts in 2010 led the U.S. Department of Agriculture to name nine West Virginia counties as primary natural disaster areas because of damage to corn, soybean, apple and peach crops, according to the report. The state also suffered severe storms, flooding, mudslides and landslides in March 2010, requiring more than \$6.8 million in federal recovery assistance. The report also points to the more than 3,000 asthma-related hospital admissions in 2011 and 128 cases of Lyme disease in 2010 as possible side effects of climate change. Changes in temperature and weather patterns can affect insect populations.

Appalachian Power plans power grid upgrades for W.Va. CHARLESTON, W.Va. - Appalachian Power on Monday announced plans to spend more than \$337 million upgrading its electrical grid in West Virginia, with much of the work slated to take place throughout the Kanawha Valley. The power company plans to rebuild...

### **PARKERSBURG NEWS AND SENTINEL**

Officials: Local drinking water is good PARKERSBURG - An annual report on water quality shows residential water to be well within state and federal safety limits. The Annual Drinking Water Quality Report by the Parkersburg Utility Board was mailed this month to customers. The report outlines any contaminants found within the water, how much was present and whether those levels violate state requirements. Eric Bumgardner, assistant manager for the Parkersburg Utility Board, said what is not included in the report are the vast number of regulated items not found in area drinking water. "All year long we have to collect samples which are tested by a third-party, independent laboratory," he said. "They look for a wide range of contaminants. The only things we report on are the regulated contaminants found in the drink water. There are pages and pages of contaminants not found," but which are still looked for through testing. Such contaminants include microbial, inorganic, pesticides and herbicides, organic chemicals and radioactive elements. Bumgardner said this year's results are similar to past years, finding only traces of a half-dozen contaminants, including nitrates from fertilizer runoff and byproducts of water treatment, such as fluoride, sodium and chlorine. All were under state guideline levels. "Parkersburg is fairly lucky in that our source water is very stable," he said. "It allows us to have a little edge on surface water sources." One item not included in the report is C-8, which has been an issue of concern in recent years after local water sources were found with high levels of the chemical used to make Teflon. "C-8 is not listed because it is not a regulated contaminant," Bumgardner said. "We do monitor that, but not as part of the state regulations." C-8 levels have "been fairly consistent and well below the health advisory levels that have been established by the EPA (federal Environmental Protection Agency)," he said.



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# MARYLAND

## **BALTIMORE SUN**

OC, Del. beaches ranked "superstars" for water quality If you're thinking of hitting the beach anytime this summer, the Natural Resources Defense Council suggests you're much less likely to get sick playing in the surf at Ocean City or at Dewey and Rehoboth beaches in Delaware. The New York-based environmental group rates the Atlantic beaches closest to most Marylanders "superstars" for water quality, awarding them five stars for ensuring the health of bathers, along with 11 other beaches nationwide. Ocean City has gotten the group's five-star rating every year since 2008. The water is tested twice a week at O.C., the NRDC reported, and just 4 percent of samples taken last year in the stretch from 124th Street north to the Delaware line had bacteria levels that exceeded state water-quality limits. Only that northern portion of Ocean City's beach was rated. The beaches at Rehoboth Avenue in Rehoboth and at Dagsworthy Street in Dewey also get tested twice a week, according to the group, and have even fewer elevated bacteria readings. In fact, Delaware as a whole earned top honors in NRDC's report card for monitoring water quality and ensuring bather safety at all of its beaches. Maryland, by comparison, came in 11th among states. Nationwide, the environmental group said the number of beach closings last year for unsanitary conditions dropped 14 percent, but it said that was largely because drier weather washed less pollution into the water.

Even so, it said the number of closings and swim advisories topped 20,000 across the U.S. in 2012 -- a level exceeded for the eighth time in the past nine years. Such a string of closings and advisories indicates serious water pollution persists, the group said. The most common reason for closing a beach or issuing an advisory against swimming is a test showing excessive levels of bacteria, indicating the presence of human or animal waste in the water. The NRDC contends that beach water quality standards set by the Environmental Protection Agency aren't protective enough, and it's threatened to file suit if they aren't strengthened. The group contends EPA standards allow beaches to be considered safe even if up to 10 percent of samples exceed bacteria limits, a rate that could allow one in 28 bathers to come down with GI distress. Moreover, the NRDC complains the agency has neglected to set standards aimed at preventing skin rashes and ear infections from contact with tainted water.

## **CARROLL COUNTY TIMES**

Editorial: Fracking comments sought People concerned about the impact of hydraulic fracturing in Maryland should take the time to read and offer comments on a report issued by a group tasked with determining best practices. On Tuesday, the Maryland Department of the Environment and Department of Natural Resources released its draft report on best practices that should be applied to horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing for natural gas in Maryland. The report includes recommendations to protect public health and safety, natural resources and the environment. Hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, aims to retrieve natural gas from the ground by fracturing rock formations with pressurized liquid, usually made up mostly of water and sand. But opponents to fracking say it pollutes water sources, results in surface contamination and causes other environmental concerns. Maryland is part of the huge Marcellus Shale gas

formation that spans from West Virginia to New York, and concerns about fracking and problems that have arisen in other states led Gov. Martin O'Malley to issue an executive order in 2011 establishing the Marcellus Shale Safe Drilling Initiative to ensure that any drilling in Maryland would be done safely. Among the report's recommendations are comprehensive gas drilling plans to minimize the amount of surface disturbance; a prohibition against well pads in certain sensitive areas; set-backs from property lines, buildings, cultural and historical sites, state and federal parks, trails, wildlife management areas, wild and scenic rivers, scenic byways, drinking water wells and surface intakes for drinking water; use of tanks with secondary containment for all cuttings, returned drilling mud, flow back and produced water; recycling of flow back and produced water to the maximum extent practicable; measures to control air emissions, noise and light pollution; and a methane leak detection and repair program from wellhead to transmission line.

### **CUMBERLAND TIMES-NEWS**

Marcellus report out for public comment CUMBERLAND — An important draft report on the best practices for drilling for natural gas in Marcellus shale, prepared for a state commission examining the issue, has been released for public comment. Depending on your perspective, the report, if adopted as state policy, would discourage gas development in Maryland or leave too many loopholes for potential environmental damage. "My fear is they've gone to the extent ... that the gas industry will look at the regulations and say 'no thanks,'" said Allegany County Commissioner Bill Valentine, a member of Gov. Martin O'Malley's Marcellus Shale Safe Drilling Initiative Advisory Commission. Valentine said he'll sign off on the best practices report because it was a commission effort and no single member is "100 percent satisfied with the report." The report embraces a "gold standard" for drilling practices and will be used to begin framing legislation and regulations for drilling, Valentine said. "Is it to look at best practices or to stop drilling without saying so?" Valentine said. The draft report was prepared by the Maryland Department of the Environment and the Department of Natural Resources. "Personally, I don't think you can legislate away all possibilities (for problems)," Valentine said. Personal property rights are also at stake, Valentine said. If property owners cannot make use of mineral rights they own, they should be compensated, Valentine said, just like farmers who give up development rights to their land in agricultural land preservation programs. "Maryland has only 1 percent of the Marcellus shale but will have the most stringent regulations of any state," Valentine said.

### **HAGERSTOWN HERALD MAIL**

'Rain tax' set to begin in Baltimore City and nine counties; Washington County not included

Some of the most heavily populated jurisdictions in the state are planning to implement a stormwater utility fee beginning next month as part of a plan to generate revenue to tackle water pollution locally and in the Chesapeake Bay. Washington County residents are not among the counties that will be required to pay the fee, referred to negatively by some as the "rain tax." The fees are mandated by the Watershed Protection and Restoration Program that was passed by the Maryland General Assembly in 2012. The counties and Baltimore City are required to "address water pollution that occurs when rainfall carries sediment, nutrients from fertilizers and pet wastes, and toxic chemicals from rooftops, roads, urban and suburban lawns and institutional grounds into local storm drains, streams, rivers and drinking water reservoirs of the State, and ultimately to the Chesapeake Bay," according to a description of the program by the Maryland

Department of the Environment. The 10 affected jurisdictions — Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Charles, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery and Prince George's counties and Baltimore City — are part of the program because they have the largest populations and are among the most heavily developed. "It provides a way for those counties to fund stormwater-management practices," said Jay Apperson, a spokesman for the MDE. Apperson said that the individual jurisdictions have the flexibility to set the fees. Harford County will charge \$12 per household the first year, while those in Charles County will pay \$43 a year, according to report.

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## VIRGINIA

### **NORFOLK VIRGINIAN PILOT**

Report: NC, Va. beaches rank high for water quality Beaches in Virginia and North Carolina once again ranked among the best in the country for clean water, according to an annual report released Wednesday by the Natural Resources Defense Council. Virginia ranked sixth of 30 states tested for beach water quality in 2012, and North Carolina placed third, according to the report "Testing the Waters: A Guide to Water Quality at Vacation Beaches." The two states received the same rankings for 2011. To compile its report, the environmental group analyzed data collected by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and state beach coordinators at more than 3,000 beaches. In Virginia, 4 percent of water samples in 2012 exceeded national public health limits for allowable bacteria levels. Two percent of samples in North Carolina exceeded limits, according to the report. That's compared with 21 percent in Ohio, which had the worst ranking. Two of the beaches with the highest rate of samples to exceed limits in the state: the beach just west of the Lesner Bridge in Virginia Beach with 17 percent and 10th View Beach Access in Norfolk with 9 percent. The beach near Lesner Bridge had closings or advisories four days last year, and 10th View had one, according to the report. King George County had the highest rate of contaminated samples with 25 percent, followed by Norfolk and Newport News with 5 percent, Accomack County with 4 percent, and Virginia Beach and Northampton County with 2 percent. Nationwide, 7 percent of water samples violated health standards in 2012, compared with 8 percent the previous two years, according to the report. The organization cited storm-water runoff and sewage as primary sources of pollution.

Chesapeake council: City will work to keep SPSA CHESAPEAKE -- The City Council went on record Tuesday as saying it favors keeping the Southeastern Public Service Authority as the regional solid-waste agency after 2018 - when the current operating agreement expires. By a unanimous vote, the council adopted a nonbinding resolution pledging to work with other Hampton Roads cities to negotiate a new agreement that would keep SPSA in place but with some modifications. Councils in Norfolk, Virginia Beach and Suffolk adopted similar resolutions this spring. The resolutions call for SPSA to continue operating as the region's trash-disposal service provider, subject to conditions to be worked out among the members. Under Chesapeake's resolution, those conditions should include requiring member cities to pay equal fees for equal services. Under the current agreement, Suffolk pays no tipping fees in exchange for hosting the regional landfill. The city also wants to prohibit SPSA from importing solid waste from other states or disposing of waste in out-of-state landfills.

### **WAYNESBORO NEWS VIRGINIAN**

EPA says it would accept data from Augusta County on bay pollution monitoring VERONA --

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency told Augusta County this week it would accept data from nutrient pollution sampling the county is considering in two county rivers, the Middle and South rivers. The sampling is needed to provide accurate data on pollution leaving the county and going to the Chesapeake Bay. Augusta County supervisors last month tabled consideration of a sampling program because of the uncertainty of whether grants could be obtained to meet the \$256,000 operating costs over a period of four years. Supervisors were also uncertain about whether the EPA would take the data. The sampling program would offer concrete data on the amount of phosphorous, nitrogen and sediment leaving Augusta County rivers and flowing into the Chesapeake Bay. The sampling equipment would be provided by the U.S. Geological Survey. The EPA wrote North River Supervisor Marshall Pattie this week to tell him the sampling program data would be acceptable to them, and said USGS is providing similar nutrient pollution data at other Virginia testing sites. Pattie said he ran for office two years ago on a promise to farmers that he would get the accurate nutrient pollution data. He believes this program would show the EPA the accurate information. Augusta County Supervisors said Wednesday they are expected to revisit the sampling idea when they meet in late July for a briefing. One reason supervisors tabled the idea of the program last month was because the uncertainty of EPA accepting the sampling data. But the letter sent to Pattie on Tuesday from EPA official Gary Shenk in the Annapolis, Md., Chesapeake Bay office states that the monitoring proposed in Augusta County "is consistent with other monitoring being done as part of the Chesapeake Bay River monitoring program."

### **ASSOCIATED PRESS (VA.)**

Concrete reef balls lowered into river in Norfolk NORFOLK -- The Chesapeake Bay Foundation has lowered 25 concrete oyster reef balls into the Lafayette River in Norfolk. Oyster harvesting has been banned on the Lafayette since the 1920s because of contamination from industries and storm water runoff. The work Tuesday was part of an initiative to restore the Lafayette to health. Reef balls are dome-shaped concrete structures that provide a surface on which swimming oyster larvae can attach. Balls are seeded with live baby oysters called "spat." They also provide the benefit of shoreline stabilization. The foundation placed 104 reef balls in the river near the Virginia Zoo, a partner in the project. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Restore America's Estuaries and the Norfolk Rotary Club have provided funding. The Virginia Marine Resources Commission built the reefs.

Virginia recorded a drop in out-of-state solid waste in 2012; state waste also declined

RICHMOND, Va. — The amount of out-of-state solid waste that ends up in Virginia declined in 2012. The state Department of Environmental Quality says solid waste from outside Virginia decreased by approximately 190,000 tons, or about 3.4 percent. The state accepted 5.4 million tons of out-of-state waste in 2012. The department also recorded a decline in the amount of solid waste from within Virginia. It was down 1.9 percent, to approximately 14.9 million tons. Solid waste includes municipal solid waste, construction debris and yard waste, among others. Most solid waste ends up in landfills. Virginia is among the top states in the nation in terms of accepting out-of-state waste. Most of it comes from Maryland, New York, Washington, D.C., New Jersey and North Carolina.

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# MISCELLANEOUS

## **BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT**

Official Says EPA to Finalize Tier 3 Gasoline Rule by End of Year The Environmental Protection Agency plans to finalize Tier 3 standards for vehicle emissions and gasoline by the end of the year, an EPA official said June 26. The standards, as proposed, would cut the allowable sulfur content in gasoline from 30 parts per million to 10 ppm beginning in 2017. The proposal also includes new limits on volatile organic compounds, nitrogen oxides, and particulate matter emissions for new light- and heavy-duty vehicles, as well as new evaporative emissions standards. The standards are expected to help areas meet national ambient air quality standards for ozone, nitrogen oxides, and particulate matter. The rule also is intended to set a single, national standard for fuels after California issued its own low-sulfur gasoline standards. Finalizing the standards is a "huge priority" for EPA, said Christopher Grundler, director of the EPA Office of Transportation and Air Quality. Grundler was speaking at the 2013 Alternative Clean Transportation Expo on a panel on advancing alternative fuel and clean vehicle technologies. EPA published the proposed standards May 21, then extended the comment period on the proposal until July 1 in response to requests from industry groups. Other EPA priorities over the next few years are implementing the greenhouse gas emissions and fuel economy standards that have been put in place over the last three years, Grundler said. This includes two sets of standards for cars and light trucks and the first set of standards for heavy-duty vehicles. EPA is shifting resources to focus on implementing the three sets of fuel economy standards, Grundler said. The agency will conduct research to see if the emissions reductions and oil savings estimated under the standards are actually achieved, he said.

Republicans Condemn Climate Plan, Step Up Criticism of McCarthy Congressional Republicans June 26 said President Obama overextended the reach of the executive branch in his plan to address climate change, adding it would impose costly regulations that would cripple the American economy.

Republicans vehemently objected to a proposal from Obama to regulate carbon emissions from both new and existing power plants, warning the regulations would cost thousands of American jobs and raise energy costs to citizens. Sen. John Barrasso (R-Wyo.) said Senate Republicans will use the Congressional Review Act to attempt to halt the emissions regulations. Both chambers would have to pass a joint resolution of disapproval to override a federal agency's regulation. "We all want to make energy as clean as we can, as fast as we can, and do it in ways that don't raise costs for American families," Barrasso told reporters. "His regulations are impacting the economy. The costs of these regulations are real, and the benefits are unknown." Rep. John Shimkus (R-Ill.) said Republicans are "united in our opposition" to the climate plan outlined by Obama. Obama June 25 called for the Environmental Protection Agency to regulate carbon emissions from new and existing power plants in a broad speech outlining his approach to addressing climate change (123 DEN A-1, 6/26/13).

The president called for expanded international engagement on the issue, for greater energy efficiency measures, and for preparing communities for the effects of climate change, among other measures.

"We don't have time for a meeting of the Flat Earth Society," Obama said in his speech.

"Sticking your head in the sand might make you feel safer, but it's not going to protect you from the coming storm. And ultimately, we will be judged as a people, and as a society, and as a country on where we go from here." Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) said the Obama administration's "war on coal" will cost jobs and said the administration has adopted a "none of the above" approach to American energy development. "I'd note that such an approach is basically nonsensical, since it ignores what's necessary to keep our country's growing energy needs met as we move toward a future where renewables look set to play a greater role,"

McConnell said in a floor speech. "Because it simply tries to pretend that it will not take years, if not decades, for these other types of energy to come online in a way that will truly meet our energy needs."

Maryland Report Urges Comprehensive Plan if Fracking Is Authorized If the production of natural gas from deep shale is allowed in Maryland, the state should require comprehensive planning for all foreseeable gas development activities in an area "rather than considering each well individually," a draft report on recommended best practices for drilling in Maryland's portion of the Marcellus Shale says. The joint state agency report marks the second installment of a three-pronged review sought by Gov. Martin O'Malley (D) in a 2011 executive order that effectively put a hold on fracking pending further study.

### **GREENWIRE**

CLIMATE: Interior study finds U.S. can store 'enormous amount' of CO<sub>2</sub> The United States has the geological potential to store between 2,400 and 3,700 metric gigatons of carbon dioxide in underground formations, the U.S. Geological Study said in an "unprecedented assessment" released this morning. Congress tasked the agency in 2007 with conducting a detailed review of underground carbon storage capabilities across all 36 U.S. basins. Its goal was to incentivize the capture and sequestration of CO<sub>2</sub> from power plants and other industries. Interior Secretary Sally Jewell called the report, the first of its kind, "nothing short of groundbreaking." And she billed it as complementary to President Obama's climate change strategy announced in a speech yesterday. "If enough of this capacity also proves to be environmentally and economically viable, then geologic carbon sequestration could help us reduce carbon dioxide emissions that contribute to climate change," Jewell said.

CLIMATE: Battle of the airwaves begins over Obama warming plan The National Republican Congressional Committee today released new Web ads taking aim at seven Democratic lawmakers with criticisms of the President Obama's new climate plan. At the same time, a leading environmental group took to the airwaves to tout the president's plan. Although the 30-second NRCC spots feature video footage of Obama's speech at Georgetown University yesterday, the centerpiece of the ads is footage that Republican attack ads have often used of Obama from a 2008 interview with the *San Francisco Chronicle*, in which he promoted

greenhouse gas regulations.

CLIMATE: Senate Democrats back Obama's plan President Obama may not need congressional backup to implement his climate change plans, but last night a group of Senate Democrats took to the floor to offer him moral support.

### **WALL STREET JOURNAL**

Big Coal to Fight Obama Plan The beleaguered domestic coal industry, bracing for the possibility that no more coal-burning power plants will ever be built on U.S. soil, is teaming up with other business groups to blunt the impact of President Obama's climate-change agenda, while also shifting its business focus to exports. Following the president's announcement Tuesday of a sweeping plan to cut greenhouse-gas emissions, including at existing coal-fired power plants, some company officials said Wednesday there is also greater urgency to develop clean-coal technology, including a cost-effective way to capture and store carbon dioxide. The coal industry plans to coordinate lobbying efforts with manufacturers and other business groups to fight rules they argue will raise electricity costs. Several groups plan to reach out to members of Congress from states that rely heavily on coal generation. "It'll be interesting, for sure, and loud," Kevin Crutchfield, chief executive of Bristol, Va., coal producer Alpha Natural Resources Inc., said in an interview. The Environmental Protection Agency is expected to develop the regulations over the next year. While final climate-plan details are unknown, one thing is clear: The domestic market for coal that is used to produce electricity will shrink as a result of the new rules and other market forces, most notably a surge in U.S. production of low-priced and cleaner-burning natural gas. "The U.S. market for coal is going to be smaller going forward. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure it out," said Mr. Crutchfield. "The question is, 'How much smaller could it get?'" Mr. Crutchfield said Alpha and other coal producers will pursue more exports of coal to China, India and Europe, including both thermal coal used to generate electricity and higher-grade metallurgical coal used to make steel. "You'll see more of a pivot on everybody's part," he said. President Obama, as part of his plan to combat climate change, called for cutting greenhouse-gas emissions 17% from 2005 levels by 2020, to be partly achieved by cutting carbon emissions from power plants. The rules could require utilities to add new equipment to lower emissions and make less-efficient plants unprofitable to operate, experts say. Increasing costs to burn coal would prompt utilities to use more existing capacity for natural gas and other fuels and to build new plants to increase that type of power generation. Energy analysts say the new rules, combined with environmental standards now being implemented, could push about one-third of the U.S. coal-fired fleet into retirement. The administration's plan to reduce carbon emissions didn't surprise anyone in the coal industry. EPA rules to lower other pollutants have already led to the retirement of coal-fired power plants and lower coal demand, prompting greater focus on exports.

Well Sealing Cited in Leaks, Not Fracking Poorly sealed natural-gas wells—not hydraulic fracturing of shale-rock formations—are likely to blame for dissolved gas found in private water wells in Pennsylvania, according to a new study by Duke University. Duke scientists found that 82% of the 141 water wells they tested in a part of Pennsylvania above the rock formation known as the Marcellus Shale had elevated levels of methane, the main component of natural gas. Water wells nearer to natural-gas-industry drilling sites had the highest levels according to the study, published online this month by the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

However, the study found no evidence that hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, the process of using water and chemicals to crack shale formations deep underground and unlock trapped oil and gas, was causing fluids to migrate upward into drinking aquifers closer to the surface. Instead, it concluded that wells being drilled were most likely not adequately sealed, allowing gas to flow upward and sometimes enter aquifers used by homes. The combination of steel pipes, called casing, and cement sheaths used in well construction don't always contain gas as intended, industry officials and observers contend. "Poor casing and cementing problems are the simplest explanation of what we found," said Rob Jackson, a professor of environmental sciences at Duke and lead author of the study, which was funded by the university. Environmentalists have criticized fracking as an industrial threat to rural communities and their drinking water. While Mr. Jackson and the other authors suggest more research is needed, the study reinforces findings of a U.S. Department of Energy task force, which suggested that more attention needs to be placed on well construction... John Hanger, who formerly headed Pennsylvania's department from 2008 to 2011 and is now a Democratic gubernatorial candidate, disagreed that new standards alone would suffice. "There is not enough staff," he said. "Industry is just like all of us: they are more careful when they know they are being watched. We need more oversight in Pennsylvania."

### **ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Report: NY, NJ had more than 1,800 beach closings ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) - Pollution or the threat of contamination prompted more than 1,800 beach closings or advisories along the Atlantic and Great Lakes coasts in New York and New Jersey last summer, according to the 23rd annual beach quality report released Wednesday by the Natural Resources Defense Council. The report analyzed government data on water testing at more than 3,000 beaches nationwide. It found there were 1,871 closing and advisory days between New York and New Jersey last year. The survey included 236 beaches in New York and 223 in New Jersey that were monitored. The environmental group posted the report on its website ([www.nrdc.org/beaches](http://www.nrdc.org/beaches)) along with a searchable map and guides for consumers to find clean beaches for their summer vacations. The most common cause of contamination was storm water runoff, with sewage overflows also a factor. Nearly 70 percent of the closings and advisories reflected a threat of potential pollution from heavy rain or other factors, rather than actual findings of high bacteria counts.

Report: Renewable energy growing fast worldwide NEW YORK - Renewable energy is growing fast around the world and will edge out natural gas as the second-biggest source of electricity, after coal, by 2016, according to a five-year outlook published Wednesday by the International Energy Agency. Developing countries are building more wind, solar, and hydroelectric power plants to meet rising power demand and combat local pollution problems. And the costs of renewables are falling below the cost of traditional power sources such as coal, natural gas, and oil in some markets with high-priced power. Renewable power, including hydropower, is the fastest-growing power-generation sector, and it is expected to increase by 40 percent in the next five years. By 2018 it will make up a quarter of the world's energy mix, according to the report, up from 20 percent in 2011. Eighty percent of the renewable power generated in the world, however, is hydropower, a technology frowned upon by environmental groups and sustainability experts because it requires the construction of dams that can damage river ecosystems.

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### **HEALTH DAY REPORTER**

How Safe Is Your Local Beach? If you're not careful, you may bring something other than sand and wet swimsuits home from a day at the beach this summer. Released Wednesday, the report card on more than 3,000 of the nation's beaches shows that the water can put swimmers at risk for catching a range of bacterial and viral illnesses. "There's a silent and invisible danger," said Steve Fleischli, director of the water program at the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), which produces the yearly report. Although the number of beach closings and advisories about polluted water at coastal U.S. beaches last year was down 14 percent from 2011, there were more than 20,000 beach closing and advisory days throughout the nation. Fifty-nine beach closing and advisory events lasted longer than six weeks, and 38 such events lasted 13 weeks in a row. The decline was attributed to a substantially drier beach season in large parts of the continental United States and Hawaii. Rainier seasons tend to be associated with higher numbers of advisories because raw sewage can overflow from treatment plants after periods of intense rain. The high number of closings and advisories shows that beaches have a serious water pollution problem, Fleischli said. "Too many beaches are sick," he added. Bacteria levels that exceed quality standards established for beach water were the top reason beaches were closed or advisories were issued. High levels of bacteria suggest the presence of human or animal waste, according to the NRDC. Overall, 7 percent of beach water samples violated public-health standards, said Jon Devine, senior water attorney for the NRDC. The Great Lakes had the highest contamination rate, at 10 percent of samples, while Delaware had the lowest, with 3 percent of beach water samples showing bacteria.

### **LARAMIE BOOMERANG (WY)**

Pavillion group spells out water study concerns People who live in a central Wyoming gas field with tainted groundwater are pressing Gov. Matt Mead for more details about how Wyoming plans to take over and carry on with a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency investigation into the contamination. They ask whether they might be able to weigh in on the investigation \_ funded with \$1.5 million from the Encana Corp. subsidiary that owns the Pavillion gas field \_ considering nobody sought their input about the change in plans before the governor's office and EPA jointly announced the shift last week. "Our main concern is that we were not consulted during your planning process and your plan does not give us any process for input as the

investigation moves forward," the group Pavillion Area Concerned Citizens said in a letter to Mead dated Monday and delivered Tuesday. "We were extremely disappointed to learn that we were the last to know." The letter also asks for details about any upcoming meetings about the new state investigation, how the local residential water wells will be tested, whether the state will address health problems Pavillion-area residents say are caused by the pollution, and if the state investigators will seek public comment. Pavillion-area farmer John Fenton, chairman of the group, signed the letter. Mead spokesman Renny MacKay described the change in plans as a decision that needed to be made between the EPA and state. Wyoming officials also consulted in advance with Encana. Mead held a conference call with Pavillion residents right after the announcement, MacKay noted. He said the governor planned to make the announcement an hour later but a draft news release outlining the deal had been leaked to The Associated Press and the news agency was preparing a story. "We're still going over it and definitely planning to prepare a thorough response to it for the residents up there," MacKay said of the Pavillion Area Concerned Citizens' letter. Pavillion-area residents asked and got the EPA to investigate their well water four years ago. They say the water began to stink of chemicals around 2005, when Encana began hydraulic fracturing in the area.

### **NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL**

Blog: How EPA Could Ruin Your Summer Vacation More than 180 million people visit coastal and Great Lakes beaches every year, and swimming and surfing are favorite pastimes in the United States. But—as is highlighted in NRDC's 23rd Annual Testing the Waters Report—closings due to hazardous pollution remain high with 20,120 beach posting and closure days at U.S. beaches in 2012. That's over 20,000 beach days ruined for the third straight year. Too many of America's beaches are sick—and they're passing on their illnesses to families across the country. It shouldn't be this way. The Environmental Protection Agency has a duty to ensure that people are protected against illnesses from polluted water. However, under EPA's latest approach to water quality protections at U.S. beaches, more beachgoers could be getting sick than otherwise should. The Obama Administration has done two things lately that should cause concern for anyone who likes to go to the beach during the summer—or any other time of year for that matter. First, EPA recently adopted new, weaker water quality provisions for U.S. beaches. The EPA is responsible for ensuring that recreational waters are safe for people. One element of this responsibility is establishing criteria that are sufficient to protect the public from contaminants in beachwater. Unfortunately, the agency's new allowable bacteria levels in recreational waters miss a critical opportunity to better protect the public. In fact, in some respects the criteria are even less protective than the 25-year-old standards they replace.

### **AMERICAN RIVERS**

Blog: Living In Gasland? Test Your Water! This week has been jam-packed with news on natural gas issues across the country. Here are some of the highlights: New Duke Study Confirms Methane Contamination Following up on a study from May 2011 [PDF], researchers from Duke University have gathered more evidence to support their assertion that natural gas concentrations are higher in drinking water wells near natural gas drilling sites in Pennsylvania. Researchers found that methane concentrations in drinking water were six times higher for homes within a kilometer of natural gas wells. They also found that ethane and propane- compounds found in the deeper geologic layers that are being drilled for natural gas- were more common in water wells closer to natural gas operations. Notably, they did not find

contamination from fracking fluids.

**NEW YORK TIMES**

Environmental Group Rates Beaches for Water Quality A day at the beach could mean potential health risks, at least at 11 “repeat offenders” called out for chronic high bacteria counts in the Natural Resources Defense Council’s annual assessment of water quality. The survey covers more than 3,000 ocean and Great Lakes beaches in the United States. Released Wednesday, the report card analyzes water contamination levels as measured by the Environmental Protection Agency. The guide also rates 200 of the most popular beaches on a five-star scale, with 13 beaches this year earning the highest scores for quality, including three along Alabama’s stretch of the Gulf of Mexico, three in Orange County, Calif., and three in the Great Lakes. Storm water runoff is the main threat to swimmer health, said Steve Fleischli, director of the water program at N.R.D.C., citing overflowing sewers and trash. “It’s our urban slobber running untreated into our waterways.” The nonprofit environmental organization advocates for greener measures on land like porous pavement, green roofs and rain barrels that absorb storm water and higher E.P.A. water quality standards. Current standards do not include swim-related rashes and ear, eye, and sinus infections. Perhaps the most useful part of the report is a Web-based map searchable by ZIP code with analysis of 2012 data on beach closures and contamination rates.